

Revitalizing Alexandria through its symbolic significance of heritage; urban form; and the distinctive spirit of place

A.Elseragy¹; A.Elnokaly² and M.Sabbagh³

^{1,3} Architectural Engineering and Environmental Design Department;
Arab Academy of Science and Technology; 21913; Alexandria; Egypt.

² Lincoln School of Architecture and Design; University of Lincoln; Lincoln; LN6 7TS; UK

* Corresponding author: E-mail: magdysabbagh@gmail.com; Tel +201222260089

Abstract

Cities have an ever-changing nature according to its citizens needs, but not always for the best. During the past half century, Alexandria's heritage city center (historic district) has been facing an on-going decay. A struggle between its symbolic significance of Euro-Mediterranean heritage, urban form, and the distinctive spirit of place and the many economic and political agendas are diminishing its heritage sites and sense of place. There are few attempts being done today to revitalize the identity and spirit of Alexandria's historic districts that will be discussed in this paper. The paper endeavours to answer the question of what other initiatives should be taken to revitalize/regenerate the Euro-Mediterranean heritage of Alexandria, with a focus of Fouad street that lies in the heart of Alexandria's historic district, and developing the city center and therefore changing the image and perception of the city as a whole. The paper identifies key performance indicators (KPI's) of Alexandria's heritage town center, measuring their current status, to form the basis of setting a list of recommendations to develop each criterion affecting the town's center performance. The paper concludes that a full strategic urban regeneration and revitalization of Alexandria's historic district is much needed to conserve and preserve what can be rescued in the area. Fouad Street can be central in conveying tomorrow's economic benefits and welfare of Alexandria's historic districts, and a holistic regeneration of that street can act as a catalyst of change and regeneration in the area.

Keywords: revitalization; city center development; heritage buildings; high street; architectural identity

1. INTRODUCTION

Alexandria, a city founded by Alexander the Great and once considered the jewel of the Mediterranean, featured a fusion of communities, heritage and cultures - Greek, Italians, Armenians, Muslims, Christians and Jews. This mixed interweaved heritage forms part of its distinguished importance of its historic value, which tend to represent and symbolise a diverse set of ideals of the city's identity, including its history, culture and mixed ideologies on one hand, and its local economic viability on the other [1, 2]. Lichfield [3] identifies two main motivations for revitalisation of heritage sites that are resource value and responsibility towards the others respectively. Resource value is an important value for revitalising existing stocks since; in general term, conservation and revitalisation of historic heritage buildings saves more resources [4, 5] (that is a sustainable approach), especially when the quality of those stocks is generally superior to the new ones [6]. Fouad is one of the oldest streets that

lie in the heart of Alexandria's historic districts town centre and heritage assets, the most potent symbol of Alexandria's grand history, with its elegant villas and antique shops. Historically, it is where the most important and well-known shops in Downtown Alexandria were. The street features landmarks such as a center that used to house the Mohamed Ali club - named for a past king - built near the British forces base in Alexandria during late 19th century. On the other end of the long street is a statue of Alexander the Great, a gift from the Greek government on the occasion of the opening of Bibliotheca Alexandria library and cultural center. Famous artist resided on the street, e.g. the British novelist and travel writer Laurence Durrell, author of *The Alexandria Quartet*, lived on the street, as did Greek poet Constantine Cavafy. To comprehend the complex nature of cities, it is essential to look back into history and identify their beginnings, growth, development and the multiple layers time has bestowed upon them [7, 8]. It is interesting to note how the historical streets and quarters of the city tend to represent their origins. The beginnings of most world-famous cities, such as Alexandria in Egypt, Istanbul in Turkey and Barcelona in Spain, were originally constructed in the area that nowadays represents the historical beginnings of these cities [9].

Originally being Alexandria's main street from its foundation in 332BC [10] and is a main element of this city's urban form. Today, being the central high street of downtown Alexandria many of the cities most prestigious heritage buildings can still be found along its sides, standing tirelessly amongst all the changes. Therefore it is obvious that revitalizing Fouad Street will directly and efficiently contributes to the revitalization of the whole city and increases its distinctive sense of place.

Today, many of the original shops located in Alexandria's historic district high streets ran out of business. Residential units are abandoned or rented at very low prices making it difficult for building owners to maintain their buildings and/or their heritage facades resulting in the deterioration of the street image, with very little or no support from appropriate authorities. Corruption has led many heritage buildings to being demolished and replaced by high-rise reinforced concrete buildings with no respect to the existing skyline or building character disturbing the streets visual harmony. The previously mentioned incidents caused the real estate value devaluation in Alexandria's city center thus rendering investment in the area unfeasible. For years businesses were reluctant of operating in Alexandria's heritage high streets until five years ago, when a few food and beverage outlets started to open up in heritage buildings. These businesses started to attract the younger population by offering quality services and carefully integrating into heritage buildings, maintaining their architectural value and artefact, while introducing a new concept within them and conserving their architectural identity. Indicators show that the real estate values of residential and commercial units are currently on the rise. Investors integrating new activities and concepts in downtown's Alexandria's heritage buildings and historic district have started to create hope for future development. But would that be enough to fully develop and conserve the heritage high streets in downtown Alexandria.

Therefore, the aim of this research is to revitalise the lost standing identity of Fouad Street, which would aid developers and stakeholders towards a more socio-economic sustainable development strategy. This would also enhance the city's symbolic significance of heritage and distinctive sense of place.

The paper sets the objectives to clarify the streets' importance in the past and determine the reason of their current deterioration; analyse the streets 'current and developing trends; assess the current socio economic aspect of the street and other factors affecting the streets' identity; utilising the previous points to determine the streets' new identity. To develop a

critical conclusion, the information will be collected and displayed in an organized method to develop a solid idea onto what could entail a successful revitalisation of Fouad Street identity.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Many research papers have been published on the subject and trying to find solutions to redevelop historic city centres. For instance a report first described the different transformations that downtown Cairo went through between 1960 and 2010 in terms of Land use/activities, socio/economic situation of residents of the area and the areas demography [10]. Empereur [10] then described the main problems affecting the area, which are actually very similar to those affecting Fouad Street. And finally, the reports prescribes three specific solutions to revitalize the area which are, widening the curbs and eliminate any unauthorized activities occurring on the curb; also the restoration of the historic facades; and creating a law forbidding the disfiguration of historic facades. These solutions seem to have worked quite well today [11].

Heart & Stachow [12] argued that to develop deteriorating town centres there are some key factors that must be critically analysed and understood that includes: shoppers who have not yet deserted the high streets; Convenience as the major customer magnet; Consumers tend to have shopping habits; Consumers seek physical shopping experiences; Online shopping is a major competitor and Group shopping enhances consumers to spend. Based on those factors they indicated key recommendations to restore a town's center glory by adopting a coordinated and collective approach; facilitating availability and convenience; maximize the town center journey; make the most out of customer services; integrate and exploit the digital experience; encourage social interaction to increase time spent in town centres.

Serageldin [13] argues, "Much is being done to add rigor in the financial and economic analysis of cultural heritage conservation projects. What is important in this new work however is that it contextualizes the project intervention—its costs and benefits—into the reality of the multiplicity of interests and actors who make up the living city. Above all, this work tries to give due recognition to the intrinsic existence value of cultural heritage, not just as an object for tourists."

Furthermore, Wrigley and Lambiri [14] affirmed through a critical analysis of British High Streets that the same adaptive flexibility, which has kept the (Historic) urban centres alive over centuries – is still a creative presence. And that clearly not all centres are showing the same capacity to adapt, both to disruptive change and to longer-term trends affecting their performance. A study [15] reported regarding the matter of upgrading high streets that there are four main Key Performance Indicators 'KPIs' that can measure a town's center potential to be developed which are: People and footfall; Diversity and vitality; Consumer and business perception and Economic characteristics

Finally, a more recent report [16] indicated that the previously mentioned measurable KPIs can be used to determine the towns center identity which is an essential factory to attract customers and revitalize the whole area.

3. RESEARCH METHOD

As concluded in the previous section it is necessary to find the town's centre's lost identity of the elegant past to be able to revitalise it. Given the historical value and centralised

location of Fouad Street in Alexandria's heritage town centre, it is adopted for analysis as a case study. This research study uses a mixed method research investigation [19, 20]. Globally the research will be conducted in the format of an investigative cross-case analysis [20, 21], to ultimately deduce the most prominent factors of user behaviour and how they affect the current use of Fouad Street. The research method includes a critical engagement with the current literature, a semi- structured interview, questionnaires and a case study analysis to fulfil the objectives of the study. Information will be gathered from Fouad Street and classified to their specific factors, according to identified Key performance Indicators (KPI's) from the literature. Each KPI is measured in a specific illustrated way and will be listed and explained. The map Figure.1 indicates the area of study's borders and location. Land use and activities located along Fouad Street will be carefully studied (High street studies), while areas around Fouad Street (Town center studies) will be broadly studied.

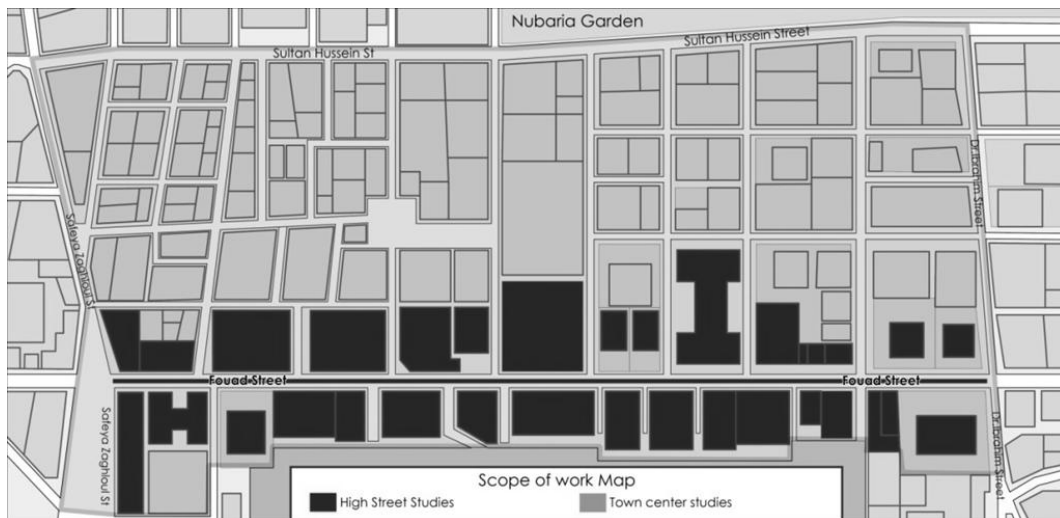


Figure 1. Studied Zone Area map (Authors' own)

3.1 Key Performance Indicators (KPI's)

Diversity and vitality

Through the land use maps prepared by the researchers and photos taken by the researchers, the percentage between four main developing trends will be illustrated in maps and charts as well as vitality and activity figures. This KPI mainly aims to measure the human perception could be collected through a series of questions for locals, visitors and business owners through personal interviews and questionnaires. Two different users of the street will be interviewed. The overall aim in this KPI is to provide users with an assessment of static and dynamic elements linked to the economic performance of a town centre.

Criteria	Key Performance Indicators			
	KPI # 1 People and Footfall	KPI # 2 Diversity and vitality	KPI # 3 Consumer and business perception	KPI # 4 Economic characteristics
	i. Footfall Refers to the number of people (cars & pedestrians) walking up & down in the street per hour for a variety of reasons.	i. Retail offer This indicator keeps track of the range and variety of retail goods and services offered in the town centre	i. Business confidence Business owners will be asked about their perception of the business opportunities in Fouad Street by personal interview.	i. Retailers revenue This indicator tracks changes in retail sales in the town centre taking the sum of all the businesses willing to volunteer this data.
	ii. Access This part also discusses the different types of transportation that can be used to reach Fouad Street and how accessible are they.	ii. Cultural offer This indicator captures the variety of leisure related services offered in the town centre	ii. Visitor retail services satisfaction Visitors will be asked about whether they are satisfied with all kinds of retail services available	ii. Partnership activity This indicator monitors evidence of a partnership approach to developing and managing the town centre at a number of levels that include the daytime, evening and nighttime economies.
	iii. Parking Discusses the public paying or free parking available in the area and the number of spots present for parking in side streets.	iii. Events This indicator keeps track of the number of events held in the town centre public realm	iii. Visitor general experience satisfaction Visitors will be asked through a questionnaire to rate Fouad Street's general experience	iii. Vacant unit mapping This indicator monitors yearly changes in the number of charity shops in a town centre.
		iv. Markets This indicator monitors the existence of regular markets in the town centre.	iv. Crime and safety perception. This indicator is determined by distributing a rating questionnaire to visitors and locals.	iv. Charity shops This indicator monitors the number of operating charity shops.
				v. Night time economy This indicator monitors evidence of active management of the evening and night-time economies in the town centre.

4. DATA COLLECTION

The following section will illustrate the different data that has been retrieved. The data is analysed and expressed in the form of charts, graphs and maps showing reliable information that will be used to fill in the “determine your town’s center identity test” which gives reliable results on how to empower Fouad’s Street long standing identity that will act as a catalyst in revitalizing the rest of downtown Alexandria.

4.1 KPI # 1 People and Footfall

4.1.1 Footfall

This section will illustrate the peak traffic hours in the middle section of Fouad Street. A camera has been placed in the balcony of building No 52 Fouad Street to film the traffic during different times of the day for 25 minutes each time.



Figure 2. Shots taken from videos filming traffic in Fouad Street during different times of the day (Authors' own)

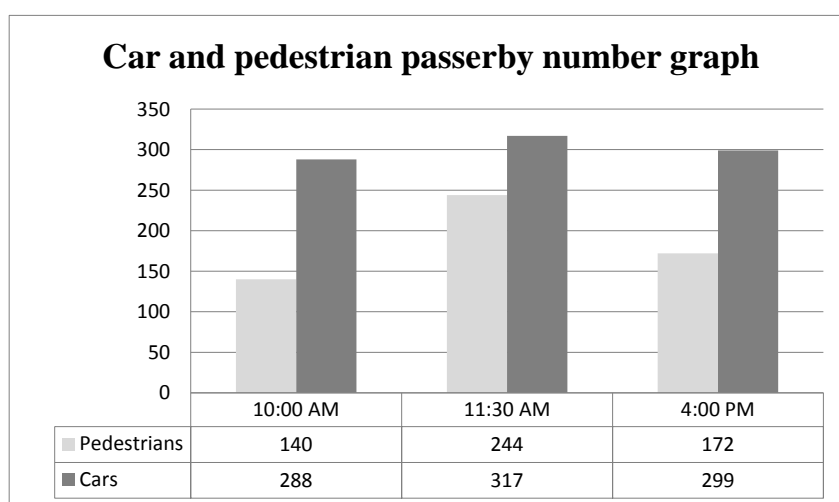


Figure 3. Graph showing the number of cars and pedestrians passing by during different times of the day (Authors' own)

A few remarks have been made after analysing the video. First of all, the highest number of cars passes by from 11:30 am till 12:00 pm with 244 passers-by and 317 cars. The following chart in Figure 3 shows the different count of cars and pedestrians during the three recording time. Second, there are no public transportation facilities passing by such as buses or minibuses. Third, most passers-by during filming times are adults travelling in groups of two and seems to be middle age, these pedestrians rarely stop looking at shops. It has been noted by visual observation that after 5pm most pedestrians are teenagers and young adults coming to eat or hangout in Fouad street cafes and restaurants.

4.1.2 Parking and access

There are three public parking facilities located in the vicinity of Fouad Street as depicted in Figure 4 each hosting approximately 150 cars. Parking is permitted in side streets on both sides as shown in Figure 4, the total length of side streets are 3500 meters, assuming that each parking place occupies 5 meters then the number of parking places on both sides of the street would therefore be 1400 car parking places.

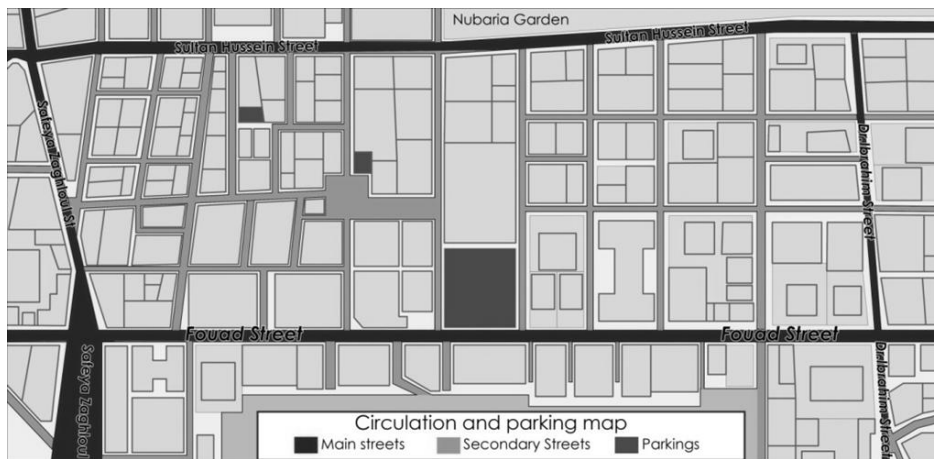


Figure 4. Circulation and car parking map (Authors' own)

4.2 KPI # 2 Diversity and Vitality

4.2.1 Retail offer

Commercial and retail activities in Fouad Street occupy 64% of ground floor units, these units offer a variety of retail options as clarified in Figure 5 and Figure 6. It has been noted that most retail units consists of either banks or food and beverage venues, which consists of 20% of the currently occupied retail units. What seems to be odd is that the number of vacant units that could be used is larger than the number of any other retail facilities occupied including the F&B units that seem to occupy the highest percentage of retail on the street. It is worth noting that this is a recent phenomenon that has taken place after the new millennium. F&B outlets attract mainly teenagers and young adults during day and night in Fouad Street. Other retail units such as banks attract young and older adults during daytime only. To sum up, the variety of retail offered in Fouad Street indicates that many kinds of businesses could be successful in this street.

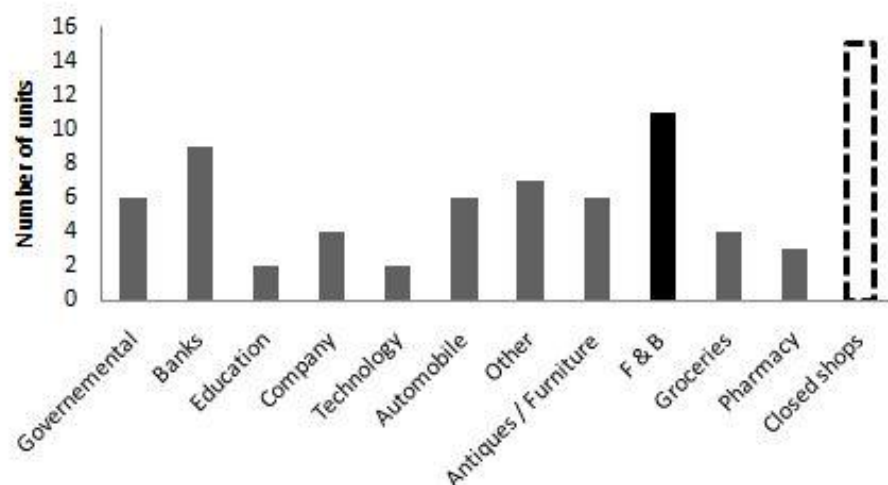


Figure 5. Illustrating the usage of ground floor units. (Authors' own)

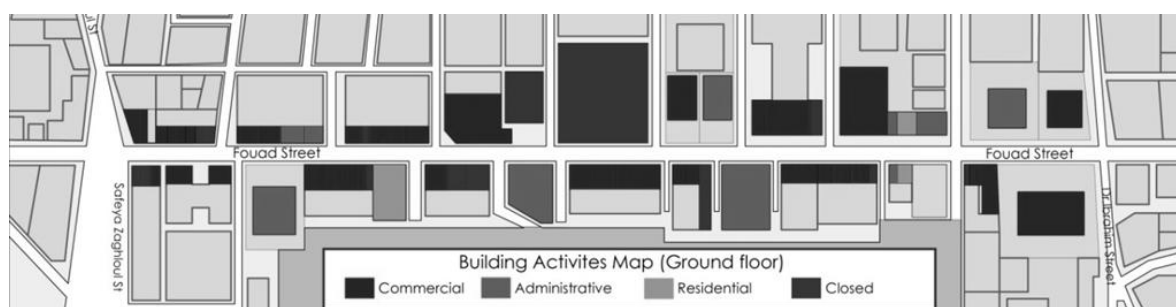


Figure 6. Location of Fouad Street commercial/retail activities (Authors' own)

4.2.2 Cultural offer

There are few cultural venues on Fouad Street but many of these venues are spread all over downtown Alexandria and in the study zone. There are four main types offering cultural richness to this area which are shown on the map Figure 7:

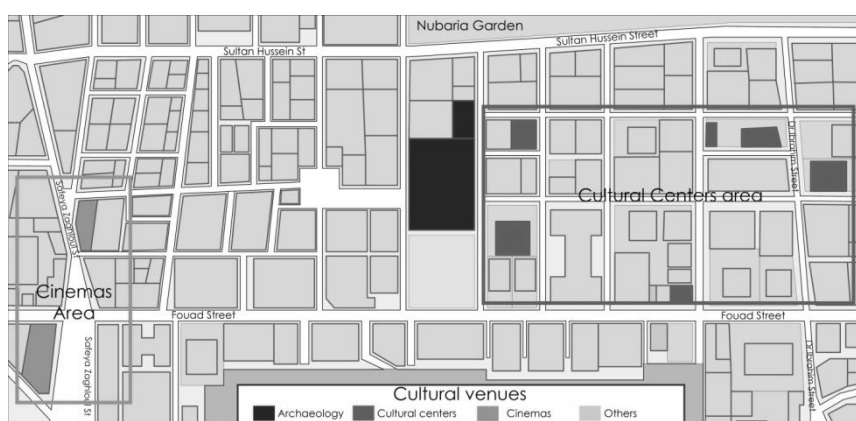


Figure 7. Location map of Cultural venues on Fouad Street (Authors' own)

i. Archaeology related venues

The two venues indicated on the map are the Greco Museum of Alexandria, which contains the largest collection of Hellenic artefacts outside of Greece. Unfortunately, it has been closed since 2009 for repairs and renovation. The second venue is the Alexandria Archaeological Society, which contains a very rich library that includes historical maps, manuscripts, archaeological surveys and various books on archaeology in Alexandria.

ii. Cultural centres

Most cultural centres are affiliated to foreign government's ministries of culture such as the German, Russian and American. Other local cultural centres serve a specific purpose such as the "Studio Janaklees" which mainly focuses on teaching cinematography and photography.

iii. Cinemas

The cinemas present in downtown Alexandria are among the first to be established in this city, where cinema Isis, inaugurated in 1910 on Fouad street was changed to Cinema Josy then to Cinema Plaza. These cinemas at the time of their inauguration were a practice and a business almost totally embraced by resident foreigners of Alexandria, it soon proved extremely lucrative.

iv. Religious buildings

In Fouad street there are two tombs "Makam" for well know sheikhs who settled in Alexandria after having been in a pilgrimage to Mecca, also one mosque at the beginning of Fouad street, however, there are no churches.

4.2.3 Events

There are two main events occurring in Fouad Street yearly.

i. Alexandria Heritage Days [7]

"CEAlex" which is a French research center studying heritage in Alexandria organizes the event yearly. This event aims to increase the foreign and local citizen's awareness of heritage by making citizens participate in various activities.

ii. Nassim El Raqs [8]

Nassim el Raqs is a contemporary dance creation festival in public spaces that takes place in Alexandria each year between April and May since 2011. The project is designed and produced by Momkin – Espaces de Possible (Emilie Petit, Marseilles, France). This event has been co-organized by Centre Rézodanse Egypte between 2011 and 2015. Once a year, a series of performances in urban spaces around downtown Alexandria and Fouad Street occurs to raise awareness of the Alexandrian audiences and foreigners towards contemporary dances and arts for free. Although mainly based on contemporary dancers and choreographers, the project also involves multidisciplinary arts.

4.2.4 Markets

There are no operating markets in this part of Fouad Street and downtown Alexandria.

4.3 KPI # 3 Consumer and business perceptions

In this section the researcher interviewed the general manager of one of the largest operating cafes/restaurant in Fouad Street. The interviewee noted that it's a good time to open new business in Fouad Street and that other owners are under the impression that opening a new business in Fouad Street will certainly be profitable especially if it involves F&B. A questionnaire was distributed to indicate the consumer perception, 100 questionnaires were distributed. The questionnaire included multiple questions to assist the different aspects of visitors and local satisfaction with Fouad Street, which included visitor satisfaction with retail offer, visitor experience satisfaction and Crime and safety perception. In total 72 questionnaires were returned, 50 of which were deemed acceptable. That is 50 % of the handed out forms were accepted for analysis and that was based on completing the whole survey clearly, and ticked only one of the boxes and not several for each question. The answers of the questionnaire will help in answering the personality test through the following charts for each question according to the gathered and analysed data from the questionnaire.

Questionnaire charts

Q1. "How much do you agree with the fact that Fouad Street offers you all the services you want" Figure 8 (a)

Q2. "How much do you agree with the fact that Fouad Street is a safe place" Figure 8 (b)

Q3. Other than the shops themselves, how would you rate Fouad Street as a place to visit? Figure 8 (c)

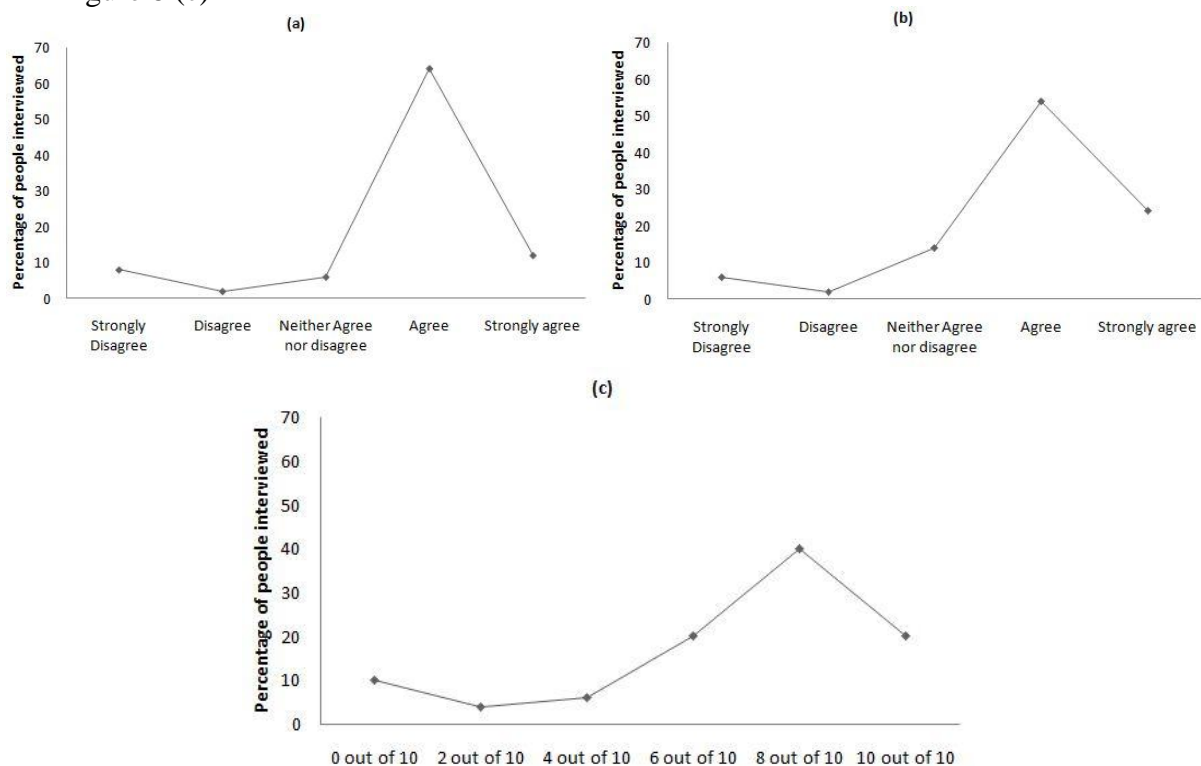


Figure 8. (a) Visitor retail satisfaction; (b) Safety perception; (c) Overall visitor satisfaction rating

4.4 KPI # 4 Economic Characteristics

4.4.1 Assumption of retailers gross sales per month

This information is derived from counting the number of customers during rush, and normal hours. This count is implemented in a mathematical formula to get the approximate revenue of the food and beverage business monthly.

The formula variables:

- “H”=Number of customers present during normal hours
- “R”=Number of customers present during rush hours
- “To”= Table turn over, which means the time spent by each customer in the restaurant.
- “Avg Cq”= Average cheque value, money spent by each customer per visit

The formulas fixed values are:

- Number of working hours per week= 70
64 regular hours and 6 rush hours (from 6pm till 9pm Thursdays and Fridays)
- Number of days per months = 30 days

To calculate the monthly revenue first the monthly number of customers must be calculated.

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Monthly no of customers per month} &= \text{no of weeks} * \\ \{ \text{No. Of customers per rush hour each week} + \text{No of customers per regular hour each week} \} \\ &= 4 * \{ [\text{Number of customers per rush hour} * \text{no of rush hours per week}] \\ &\quad + [\text{Number of customers per regular hour} * \text{number of regular hours per day}] \} \end{aligned}$$

$$\text{Monthly number of customers} = 4 * \{ [(R/To) * 6] + [(H/To) * 64] \}$$

After calculating the number of customers per month, the average cheque multiplies this number and then the monthly revenue is obtained.

Accordingly the following table [Table.1] has been prepared showing the different F&B outlets and their assumed revenue per month. Also a column showing the monthly rent value of each outlet enables to understand how much profit could be made in the F&B outlets in Fouad Street. The monthly rent is calculated based on the fact that the average rent value per square meter on the ground and mezzanine floor in Fouad Street is 300 Egp/sq. and 150Egp/sq. respectively.

It is clear according to Table 1 below that most F&B are generating very good revenues, of course this is not calculating any of the salaries they pay, or the cost of the food and raw materials they need, or price of other services including (water, gas, electricity and other bills). These F&B outlets attract young adults during the day and night and bring life into Fouad Street. The total revenues generated by the F&B outlets in Fouad street based on the calculation presented above is an average of 1.5 Million Egyptian pounds per month.

4.4.2 Partnerships

There are several business and community partnerships in Fouad Street. These partnerships usually serve a specific group of people or community but do not interfere in downtown management and are not interconnected, some of these partnerships are:

- i. Alexandria businessmen association (ABA)

This association aims to develop businesses in all of Alexandria and represent businessmen in different councils.

Table 1. F&B outlets monthly revenue (Data provided based on average monthly rent in Fouad street, observation of number of customers coming into the shops and average cheque payment that was highlighted by store managers and the customers- authors own)

Name	Rent / Month	Customer/ Month	Monthly revenue	After subtracting rent
Roastery	75000	2432	EGP 145,920	EGP 70,920
Fresco Gelato	22500	3520	EGP 70,400	EGP 47,900
Fernandos	57000	2384	EGP 154,960	EGP 97,960
L Passage (Shelf shops)	330000	3760	EGP 112,800	EGP 242,000
L Passage		6560	EGP 459,200	
Bomba, Pastawisi	39000	5840	EGP 204,400	EGP 165,400
Pick n go	18000	3280	EGP 82,000	EGP 64,000
Country Hills	24000	2848	EGP 170,880	EGP 146,880
Rocking Rolls	9000	1520	EGP 38,000	EGP 29,000
Luigis	24000	1192	EGP 77,480	EGP 53,480

ii. Sudanese citizens association

This association helps Sudanese immigrants or residents in Alexandria integrate into the society by suggesting jobs or housing and linking this community together through cultural events.

iii. L Passage

L Passage is an association of different local and international F&B brands located at 52 Fouad Street.

4.4.3 Vacant units study

Although many outlets and units make good business there is a lot of empty units that represent 19% of the total units available in Fouad Street Figure 9.

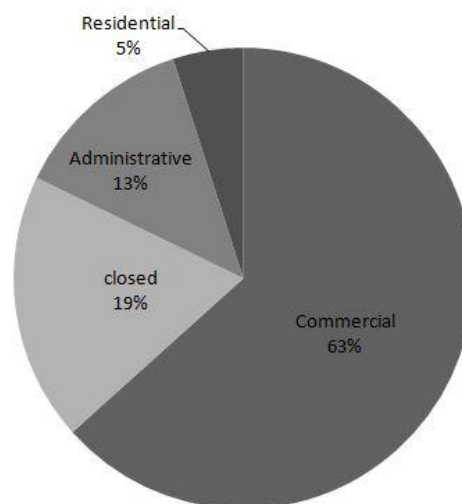


Figure 9. Chart indicating percentage of closed units (19%), (Authors' own)

The main reason why these units are still unused is due to legal problems mainly. The largest unused area belongs to the municipality that has been looted and destroyed in the 2011 uprising. This 3600 square meter land is actually used as a parking area therefore not developed to reach its full potential.

4.4.4 Night-time economy

The most active sector at night is the food and beverage sector which operates until 11.00 pm. This results in the presence of pedestrian and car traffic in the street creating a sense of security in Fouad Street at night. The following map Figure.10 shows the active shops and areas at night.



Figure 10. Map indicating the active shops and areas at night, (Authors' Own)

5 Data Analysis, Discussion and Results

This table [Table.2] shows the resume of all the analysis and data collection that has been made regarding Fouad Street (The main high street) and Downtown Alexandria (The town center). This data will help fill out the test provided in the “Successful Town Centres” paper [16] to determine Fouad Street’s identity, giving a clearer vision on how to revitalize downtown Alexandria.

Table 2. Illustrating a summary of the data collected

People and Footfall		Consumer and Business perception	
Footfall	Average 600 cars and 370 pedestrian passing every hour (varies in rush hours)	Business confidence	High and still increasing
Access	Mainly by car, nearest public transportation hub are 300m to 600m away	Visitor satisfaction with retail	95% satisfied
Parking	3 public parking hosting 150 places each. Side of street hosting 1400 places in the studied zone indicated in Figure 1.	Visitor satisfaction with general experience	73% satisfied
		Safety perception	86% feel safe in Fouad Street
Diversity and vitality		Economic characteristics	
Retail offer	39% independent stores. Dominant activities are F&B outlets 15% and banks 12%.	Retail sales	F&B outlets average total per month 1.5 Million EGP
Cultural offer	5 cultural centres provide 45% of culture offer.	Partnership working	3 partnerships (1 Business, 1 social, 1 F&B managerial)
Events	Two main events only	Charity shops	No charity shops
Markets	There are no markets in the area	Vacant units	15 vacant units at 19% from the total units
Crime reporting	Data unavailable	Night time economy	11 F&B outlets and two cinemas open till 12 pm

5. RESULTS

According to the paper named “Successful Town Centres- Developing Effective Strategies” [16] the town center personality test helped to determine Fouad’s Street long standing identity. Through the study the questionnaire was conducted and the results shown that the shops on the high street consisted of a considerable proportion of independent businesses catering primarily to higher spending local residents, with a few large retail chains and the odd department store. The people on the High street were mainly local residents and people from other neighbourhoods who visit Fouad Street mainly to use the F&B stores; visit other shops; visit some of the popular antiques stores and access services. Most of the events hosted at the HS **are** often more culture led events for a global audience interested mainly in the Alexandrian culture, heritage and amenities. Some of the negativity seen by the locals describes what they see at the HS are some vacant units, but most of the vacant units in the study zone are located along the side streets where small independent businesses tend to operate. The people described the public spaces in the town centre as designed for a moderate throughput of people but struggles to cope with the flow of people and cars at certain times, with rather deficient signage. They pointed out that they can not find any charity shops at all in the town as this is something not usually seen in Egypt. When it comes to community spirit this was described as a growing sense of community spirit, though with a somewhat transient feel with high levels of energy and diversity provided by younger residents and visitors.

6. CONCLUSION

The importance of historic centres and spine streets as Fouad Street in Alexandria is that they serve as a place of identity, memory and belonging, and this is definitely the case for most of the Alexandrians. Historic city centres tend to forge an urban identity for the rest of city, and for surrounding districts to adopt. Hence, a successful revitalisation of those centres and streets will have a positive impact and act as a catalyst for change in the whole area and hence, the city. In that sense Fouad Street that lies in the heart of Alexandria’s historic district is a representative of the entire city, the result of the outstanding multitude of historic buildings and heritage and archaeological sites, which manage to endure time, contradicting new functions and development that take place around them, at expeditious rates. Revitalizing Fouad Street and Downtown Alexandria should be through empowering its identity and its strong points that entails cultural heritage, archaeological presence, retail sophistication, independent stores, marketing towards outside visitors and its specific local euro Mediterranean heritage.

Downtown Alexandria can be considered to be a specialist Town center according to the analysis of the results of the conducted test questionnaire. According to the “Successful Town Centres” report by Coca-Stefaniak (2013) this type of town centre tends to be known for its high degree of retail sophistication, often with an above average number of specialist independent retailers (e.g. delis, continental-style, cafes, wine shops, antique stores, fashion boutique shops). They also tend to have above-average geographical catchment areas. Often they would not see themselves as global or major national tourism destinations. This may be due to competition from major cities, or limited geographical catchment areas, though they will tend to have a strong local character of their own.

Other weaker factors have to be developed also such as infrastructure, renovation of facades of its buildings, poor signage, parking facilities and waste management. But the key

to enhance Downtown Alexandria's full potential and attract a maximum number of visitors is by developing the previously mentioned five points, as they would make Downtown Alexandria unique within the governorate and Egypt. This should be undertaken through a full strategic urban regeneration and revitalisation of Alexandria's historic district. Fouad Street can be central in conveying tomorrow's economic benefits and welfare of Alexandria's historic districts, along with the stipulation of decent jobs and human wellbeing within an environment liberated from the risks and threats of pollution and resource depletion.

Concomitantly, local awareness and ensuring public participation are important factors that contribute positively to the improvement and revitalization of Alexandria's distinctive spirit of place. All members of the community, often representing a range of socio-economic groups, are encouraged to contribute with their ideas. As a result, citizens are empowered, and each inhabitant begins to contribute, with what little part they can, in both decision-making and in safeguarding and maintaining Alexandria's architectural artefacts, Euro-Mediterranean heritage and the beauty of their city. Finally, a holistic revitalisation and conservation of Alexandria's Historic district will occur through the joint collaboration of key stakeholders, private organisations, local community-based organisations, international organisations and governmental agencies.

7. REFERENCES

1. Elnokaly, A. and Elseragy, A. (2007) Environmental scrutiny of traditional Mediterranean forms for contemporary application (an empirical study). In: Euro-Mediterranean Regional Conference Traditional Mediterranean Architecture. Present and Future", July 12-15, 2007, Barcelona, Spain.
2. Elseragy, A. and Elnokaly, A. and Alsaadani, S. (2007) The reflection of Euro-Mediterranean historical culture on contemporary architecture in Alexandria. In: Euro-Mediterranean Regional Conference Traditional Mediterranean Architecture. Present and Future", July 12-15, 2007, Barcelona, Spain
3. Lichfield, N., (1988) Economics in Urban Conservation (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
4. Elnokaly, A. and Elseragy, A. (2013) Sustainable heritage development: learning from urban conservation of heritage projects in non-western contexts. *European Journal of Sustainable Development*, 2 (1). pp. 31-56. ISSN: 2239-5938
5. Elnokaly, A. and Wong, J. F. (2015) Demystifying vernacular shop houses and contemporary shop houses in Malaysia; a green-shop framework. *Proceedings of the 30th International PLEA conference 2014*. pp. 295-303.
6. Tiesdell, S, Oc, T. and Heath, T. (1996) Revitalizing Historic Urban Quarters (Architectural Press)
7. Elnokaly, A. and Elseragy, A. and Alsaadani, S. (2009) Sustaining historical city centres through urban regeneration. In: The Joint Symposium of International IAPS-CSBE & Housing Network, 12-16 October 2009, Istanbul, Turkey.
8. Elnokaly, A. and Elseragy, A. (2011) Sustainable urban regeneration of historic city centres: lessons learnt. In: World Sustainable Building Conference, 18-21 October 2011, Helsinki.
9. Elnokaly, A. and Elseragy, A. (2012) Historic city centres as catalysts for wider sustainable urban regeneration. In: *Requalifying the Built Environment: Challenges and Responses*. Hogrefe Publishing GmbH Merkelstr. 3, 37085, Göttingen, Germany. ISBN: 9780889374300
10. Empereur J.Y, 2002. Alexandria Past Present and Future 1st ed., Thames and Hudson Ltd, London.

11. Zakaria. M, 2011. Revitalization Strategies for areas in Khedival Cairo, Assessment report. Al Ismaelia Real Estate Investments. Cairo, Egypt
12. Heart. C, Stachow. G, 2014. The Customer Experience of Town Centres. Economic & Social Research Council, Loughborough University, Leicestershire, UK.
13. Serageldin.I, 1999."The architecture and economics to intervening in historic cities". World Bank, Washington DC, USA.
14. Wrigley. N, Lambiri. D, 2015. British High Streets: from Crisis to Recovery? University of Southampton, UK.
15. GENECON LPP and Partners, 2011. "Understanding High street performance". Leeds, UK.
16. Coca-Stefaniak.A 2013. Successful Town Centres- Developing Effective Strategies. Association of town center & city management, UK.
17. Service Pedagogique team "Alexandria Heritage Days", <http://www.pedagogie.cealex.org/> (accessed 21 Oct. 2016).
18. Word press Release Team. (2011) "Nassim El Raqs ", <https://nassimelraqs.wordpress.com> (accessed 13 January 2017).
19. Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morrison, K. (2007). Research Methods in Education (6th ed.). Abingdon: Routledge.
20. Creswell, J. W. (2011). Controversies in Mixed Methods Research. In N. Denzin, & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research (4th ed., pp. 269-283). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
21. Simons, H. (1996) The paradox of case study. Cambridge Journal of Education, 26(2) 225–240.
22. VanWynsberghe, R. and Khan, S. (2008) Cultivating the under-mined: Cross-case analysis as knowledge mobilization Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung / Forum: Qualitative Social Research